AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 (currently amended). A system for managing a networked office automation device arranged and networked in a work place, comprising:

verification means for verifying operation of the office automation device by a verified user in the work place,

information acquisition means for acquiring device usage information including a value indicating an amount of usage of the office automation device by the verified user, and

information storage means for sequentially storing the device usage information acquired by the information acquisition means.

2 (currently amended). The system of claim 1, ~~comprising~~ wherein said verification means comprises:

user information storage means for storing user information identifying at least one user permitted to operate the office automation device,

user information input means for inputting identification information identifying a user operating the office automation device, and

user verification means for verifying a user operating the office automation device in accordance with identification information input via the user information input means and user information stored in the user information storage means,

the information acquisition means comprising:

counting means for counting an amount of usage of the office automation device by the verified user, and

information creation means for creating device usage information, the device usage information comprising the amount of usage of the office automation device counted by the counting means and

information for identifying the verified user.

3 (currently amended). The system of claim 1, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record of the office automation device based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting a message corresponding to the comparison result.

4 (currently amended). The system of claim 1, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record of an arbitrary office automation device used by an arbitrary user based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting a message corresponding to the comparison result.

5 (currently amended). The system of claim 1, wherein the office automation device comprises a replaceable, expendable component, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record of the office automation device subsequent to replacement of the replaceable, expendable component in the office automation device, based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting a message corresponding to the comparison result.

6 (currently amended). The system of claim 1, wherein the user is associated with a section, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a totalized usage amount record ~~according to~~ indicating a usage amount of the office automation device totalized for the section associated with the user, based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the totalized usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting a message corresponding to the comparison result.

7 (withdrawn). A software control system for driving a terminal controlling a networked device, comprising:

storage means for storing driver software for driving the terminal,

selection means for selecting a device to be controlled by the terminal,

correspondence information storage means for storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between the software stored in the storage means and the selected device,

specification means for specifying driver software for driving the selected device in accordance with the correspondence information stored in the correspondence information storage means, and

installation means for providing the terminal with software specified by the specification means via a network and installing the software in the terminal.

8 (withdrawn). The system of claim 7, comprising:

input means for inputting information identifying a driver software installer,

storage means for storing the information identifying the driver software installer, and

output means for identifying the driver software installer, based on the information stored in the storage means, when driver software stored in the storage means is upgraded, and

outputting a message to the identified driver software installer.

9 (withdrawn). The system of claim 7, wherein the storage means comprises means for storing information indicating that a driver software installer wants to be informed about a driver software upgrade, and

the output means comprises means responsive to the storage means for informing the driver software installer of a driver software upgrade.

10 (withdrawn). A system comprising:

a networked target device, and

a management device, wherein the management device stores user information specifying a user permitted to operate the target device,

the target device sends identification information identifying a user operating the target device to the management device,

the management device receives the identification information, verifies the user in accordance with the stored user information and the received identification information, and

informs the target device of a verification result,

the target device permits a user verified by the management device to operate the target device, retrieves a usage amount of the target device used by the user, and informs the management device of the retrieved usage amount, and

the management device stores, in association with each other, information corresponding to the informed usage amount, the user, and the used device.

11 (withdrawn). The system of claim 10, wherein the management device outputs a message based on the stored usage information.

12 (withdrawn). A management client for communicating with a controller server that controls a networked target device, comprising:

information input means for inputting identification information identifying a user operating the target device,

verification means for sending the identification information to the controller server and

verifying the user operating the target device in accordance with response information sent from the controller server,

counting means for counting an amount of usage of the target device made by a user operating the target device, and

information sending means for sending device usage information, comprising the amount of usage of the target device counted by the counting means, to the controller server.

13 (withdrawn). A controller server for controlling a networked target device through a management client, comprising:

storage means for storing user information specifying a user permitted to operate the target device,

identification information acquisition means for acquiring, from the management client via a network, identification information identifying a user operating the target device,

verification means for verifying a user operating the target device, in accordance with the identification information acquired by the identification information acquisition means and

the user information stored in the user information storage means,

information acquisition means for acquiring usage information of the target device,

comprising an amount of usage of the target device made by a verified user operating the target device, and

information storage means for sequentially storing the usage information acquired by the information acquisition means.

14 (currently amended). A method for managing usage of a networked office automation device arranged and networked in a work place, comprising:

verifying a user in the work place operating the office automation device,

obtaining an amount of usage of the office automation device made by the verified user operating the office automation device,

acquiring usage information of the office automation device comprising the obtained amount of usage of the office automation device, and

storing the acquired usage information in a database.

15 (currently amended). The method of claim 14, comprising:

processing the usage information stored in the database, and

based on a comparison of the amount of usage and a reference value,

sending a message corresponding to a comparison result to at least one of a user of the office automation device and an administrator of the office automation device.

16 (withdrawn). A method for controlling software for driving a control terminal that controls a networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.

17 (withdrawn). The method of claim 16, comprising:

storing information associated with a user that has installed driver software in a storage device,

identifying a user that has installed driver software in a storage device when the installed driver software is upgraded, and sending a message to the identified user.

18 (currently amended). A computer program for executing a method of managing use of a networked office automation device arranged and networked in a work place, the method comprising:

verifying a user in the work place operating the office automation device,

obtaining an amount of usage of the office automation device made by the verified user operating the office automation device,

acquiring usage information of the office automation device comprising the obtained amount of usage of the office automation device, and

storing the acquired usage information in a database.

19 (withdrawn). A computer program for controlling software for driving a control terminal that controls a networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.

20 (currently amended). A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave, for controlling a computer to execute a method for managing usage of a networked office automation device arranged and networked in a work place, comprising:

verifying a user in the work place operating the office automation device,

obtaining an amount of usage of the office automation device made by the verified user operating the office automation device,

acquiring usage information of the office automation device comprising the obtained amount of usage of the office automation device, and

sequentially storing the acquired usage information in a database.

21 (withdrawn). A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave for making a computer execute software for driving a terminal which controls a networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.